



Street Art News

FREE

Volume I Issue 1

MID-SPRING EDITION

© The San Francisco Street Artist Guild, 1975

LIFE AMONG THE SAVAGES

or How to Become a Street Artist in 10 Easy Lessons

I, Jerico Lemoldo, take pen in hand to write about my boyhood and life as a San Francisco street artist, to reveal the truth behind the myths and legends that exist to this very day—not to expose, but to clarify. The names have been changed to protect myself along with the guilty.

THE OLD DAYS

I first started out on the streets of San Francisco, one summer day, by collecting all the items I had made in school, occupational therapy or in my sleep. I took a blanket and my box of "crafts" (back in those days I was innocent, you understand) and spread them all out on the grass at Beach Street. I relaxed, laid in the sun, got stoned, and made \$83.00.

"My God," I said, "What have I been doing all my life? I've discovered a gold mine." From that day on I was a street artist (although it was a long time later before I made \$83.00 again).

Of course, as soon as I saw the light (and the Rainbow) I felt I had to look like a street artist so I immediately approached a leather craftsman, Darwin Benstein (a fictitious name of course), for a pair of sandals.

"Do you make sandals?" I inquired.

"Si, one year guarantee."

So I ordered a pair— six months later I asked if they were ready.

"Manana," he said.

(continued on back page)

DEDICATION

"In showing my work in the street as an artist, I am able to reach a far greater and more varied audience than in a gallery or museum. At this level, my artistic function in society reaches fruition as a communicator and teacher. At curbside if only for a brief moment I attempt to encourage the passerby to reach out and touch something creative and perhaps magical."



--- Frank Whyte

This first edition of STREET ART NEWS is dedicated to the memory of Frank Whyte, who on March 5, 1975, passed away peacefully in his sleep.

Frank was a street artist whom many of us knew as the creator of Frank's Frog Farm. His star catchers and belly holders brought many smiles and laughs to those who had the good fortune of meeting Frank. His talents were numerous and his friends knew him as an excellent astrologer, sculptor, painter, and writer. His contribution to the art community will never be fully appreciated, but his contribution to the street artists cannot be overlooked.

He was one of the founding organizers of the street artists' movement, co-authored the certification program presently run by the Art Commission, and voluntarily worked as the first Secretary

of the Street Artists' Guild for over two years. He was arrested once on the steps of City Hall while collecting signatures for a petition supporting street artists and when his health failed, preventing his active involvement, he continued to give his moral support to those who worked on Proposition "J".

It was because of Frank's help that we all were eventually able to obtain our street artists' licenses and exercise the freedom which he fought for while he was alive. His death was the result of his inability to overcome injuries he sustained in an automobile accident. His body was cremated and his ashes were cast to the wind, water, and ocean beach.

For those who knew Frank, the world is now a little emptier and for those who did not know him their lives are a little richer because of him.

ARTISTS' COURT VICTORY

Superior Court Judge Ira Brown has thrown out of court a suit, filed at the peak of the Christmas shopping season by former Downtown Association big wheel, Thomas Gray. Gray's suit asked that the police be ordered to remove street artists from downtown sidewalks on the grounds that they were "fire hazards". The basis for this allegation was a set of "fire codes" written up by the Fire Chief, without any public hearings, the week before.

The case was dismissed for lack of a "cause of action", but for two days last December many street artists were effectively kicked out of the Union Square area, intimidated by the threat of arrest under the questionable codes.

Some street artists have filed suit in Small Claims Court against Mr. Gray for damages arising from the loss of business they suffered as a result of his lawsuit.



photo by Karen Haas

This replica of the Golden Gate Bridge, made of Hawaiian koa wood and maple, is eight feet long and six feet, two inches high. Its street artist creators, Gene and Alex, use the bridge to display the wooden cars and trucks which they make and sell. They could be arrested for having the bridge on the sidewalk, because it exceeds the maximum display size allowed by a new ordinance passed by the Board of Supervisors. - see page 3.

photo by Dale Axelrod



SCANDALS IS BACK

The San Francisco Mime Troupe, San Francisco's veteran political comedy theatre, is reviving its home-grown play, **SAN FRAN SCANDALS**, a "vaudeville - expose" complete with tap dancing and finely honed slap-stick routines. The Mime Troupe also expects to premier its new act, **BEANS**, in April -- the work is a short play about food, set in the exotic locales of Bananaland, the Richmond District, and Washington D.C.

In **SAN FRAN SCANDALS** the Troupe uses vaudeville, an old-fashioned style, to attack a space-age target: urban renewal. The play revolves around a pair of down-and-out ex-vaudevillians whose humble flat is razed to make way for San Francisco's scheduled 100 million dollar Performing Arts Center. The story takes off into the zany world of mistaken identities and hilarious reversals when the dispossessed couple bring their case to powerful redevelopment mogul and patron of the arts, Harold P. Smellybucks.

SCANDALS, a hit in the parks in 1973 (the Mime Troupe is San Francisco's original outdoor theater) was the company's contribution to an effort by artists and community groups to prevent the use of Revenue-sharing funds for the construction of the proposed Performing Arts

Center. This coalition has scored limited, but meaningful successes, disproving the old adage that you can't fight City Hall. The fact that, two years later, the Performing Arts Center remains a controversy - not an established feature of San Francisco life - is some measure of the effectiveness of community resistance.

SCHEDULE

***SAN FRAN SCANDALS** plus The Pickle Family (a juggling troupe recently home from a nationwide tour) will be at Dinklespiel Auditorium, Stanford University, on April 22, at 8:00 p.m.

***SCANDALS** at Diablo Valley College, at noon, on May 2. **SCANDALS** at Joaquin Miller Park in Oakland, at 2 p.m., on May 4.

SCANDALS at S.F. State University, at noon, on May 14.

SCANDALS at Paltenghi Youth Center, 1525 Waller St., in San Francisco, on May 16 or 17, at 8 p.m.

* * *

BEANS at Coalition to fight the High Cost of Living Rally, Civic Center, San Francisco, on April 26. The rally is scheduled from 11-3.

The Mime Troupe's performing schedule is strictly **TENTATIVE** (except for starred dates) - please call 285-1717 to confirm times.

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SPRING FAIR

The Noe Valley Spring Fair, May 18th, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., will feature arts, crafts, music, puppet shows, dancing, food, pony rides, etc., Anyone interested in selling at the fair can contact Cindy Green on Beach Street for reservation forms, or send \$5, their name, craft, phone number, and address to: Lynda Ware, 927 Sanchez St. S.F. 94114. Reservations are being taken on a first come first serve basis, and all fees go to the Noe Valley Nursery Cooperative, a parent-run school.

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V.L.A.

Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts is a New York-based organization of attorneys interested in legal issues as they concern artists and the arts. They are producing a newsletter, **Art and the Law**, which includes articles on important court cases, comments on legislation, on artists' problems, and other material of interest to artists and lawyers struggling for artists' rights.

If you wish to receive **Art and the Law**, they ask that you send a tax-deductible contribution in any amount to Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts, 36 W. 44th Street, New York NY, 10036, together with your name and address.

O'BRIEN PICKED TO REPRESENT STREET ARTISTS

Sandra O'Brien was chosen to be the Representative of the San Francisco Street Artist Guild by its eleven-member Steering Committee, after winning her seat on that committee at the Guild's general elections.

Ms. O'Brien, a copper and glass enamelist, took the oath of office along with Dale Axelrod (portrait artist) who was elected Secretary, and Jerry Lee (woodcraftsman and jeweler) who was successful in his campaign for Treasurer.

Other regular members of the annually elected committee are: Bob Clark (puppeteer), David Browda (leather craftsman), Robert Carlsen (jeweler and sculptor), Cynthia Green (jeweler), Rick Rochlin (jeweler), and Neville Stocken (sculptor).

Three temporary members of the Steering Committee are elected by the general membership each month.

CAUCUS

The San Francisco Artist's Caucus is planning a conference on May 17, at 540 Powell Street to hear the concerns of artists working in the community and to present a platform for the arts. They invite all artists to help during April to develop a position paper on the state of the arts, covering proposed solutions and priorities. Anyone interested in helping them prepare the position paper should call 989-6095 to find out about the work meetings, which will focus on individual issues. You can also let them know

your ideas and priorities or get further information by writing to: **SAN FRANCISCO ARTISTS CAUCUS**, S. F. Community Congress, 540 Powell Street, S.F. 94108.

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says California Critic
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CONFERENCE

The California Visual Arts Conference, which is being co-sponsored by visual art organizations throughout the state, will be held on April 26, at the Exposition Center, Cal-Expo, in Sacramento. Attention will be focused on various legislative proposals as they effect the artist. Workshops dealing with the reorganization of the California Arts Commission, 1% of state building funds for art, Artists in Education, Grant Programs, Retention of Re-

production Rights, Artist/Dealer Relationships, and other areas of importance will be held. Resolutions on these subjects will be drawn and voted on by the conference for distribution to both the legislature and the media. The registration fee is \$4 and transportation, via chartered bus, will be available for a small fee. For more information, contact: Center for the Visual Arts in Oakland (451-6300) or Leith Johnson (658-3361).

COLLECTOR'S RECORDS
USED RECORDS
510 1/2 FREDERICK ST. 661-4257 AFTER 12 p.m.
THE MAGIC FLUTE

GUIDE TO GALLERIES

Artists Equity Association is publishing an **Artists Guide to Galleries**, a booklet containing information relevant to artists on over 300 Bay Area art exhibiting institutions. In order to appeal to advertisers, they need **PRE-PUBLICATION ORDERS**, so they can assure potential advertisers that the booklet will reach a large audience. Al-

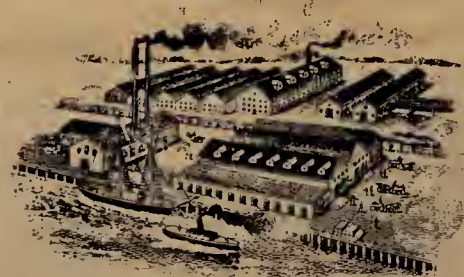
though a definite price has not yet been set for the guide, it will be under \$5, and your order would give you the option to buy when the price is announced. Send your order to AEA Center, 620 Sutter St. Rm. 203, S.F., Ca. 94102. Anyone who can volunteer to help with the guide should contact Felicity Pruden at 552-0277.

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ART COMMISSION PROGRAM SHORT-CHANGED

"People should be paid for this work; there's very little glory in it." The "people" being referred to are Mayoral appointees, and the "work" they should be paid for is their service on the committee which screens potential street artists for the purpose of making sure the work the artists sell on the street is of their own personal creation. Howard Lazar is the speaker and he is lamenting the fact that although he requested \$2,000, he was only given \$1,000 this year to coordinate and administer the Art Commission's entire Street Artists Program.

It seems Howard ran out of money several weeks ago, the screening committee has not been paid for its last two meetings, and their schedule (the committee only meets once a month) coupled with the number of people applying for certification has created a waiting list that now extends into June. Nobody but nobody can get a license until they have been screened and certified by the Art Commission.

To solve this problem the Street Artists Program is requesting a \$1,600 supplement from the Board of Supervisors to tide itself over through June and a \$3,600 allocation for next year. Not a whole lot to ask for considering the \$62,000+ that street artists have paid to the city in certification fees and license fees over the past two and a half years.

Lazar is also trying to get the Supervisors to support an amendment to Article 24 which will allow him to legally pay the members of the 5-person screening committee \$25 each for every meeting they attend.

All these requests are aimed at having more frequent screenings (18 a year) and hopefully will enable the backlog of new applicants to be pushed through before the big press this coming July when an estimated 500 current license holders are expected to request to be screened by the committee so their licenses can be renewed. "That situation could become sticky," admits Howard, knowing full well that if his screening committee is unable to schedule additional meetings, many of these artists will be out of the means of making their living, or forced to operate illegally.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Classes in advanced and basic photography. For more information write: Ron Sugiyama, Box 665, S.F. 94101.

Students will learn to shoot and develop in the 1884 photographic process known as tintype. Limit of four students per class. Fee open. Write: Ken Falkan, Box 201, Rio Nido, Ca. 95417; S.F. phone: 621-4958.



photo by Dale Axelrod

With the passage of Proposition "J" and the winning of a legal status for street artists has come an atmosphere conducive to the flourishing of all kinds of theatrical events on the sidewalks of the city. Various jugglers, puppeteers, dancers, musicians, singers, actors, mimes and magicians have all happily made the discovery that even if not "all the world's a stage," at least most of San Francisco is. Residents and visitors are equally delighted to find one of our more comical performers, Trix the Clown, seated on a sidewalk bench, twisting balloons into the shapes of familiar animals, and giving these sculptures away free to an audience of appreciative, giggling children. When he presents a little girl an inflated giraffe, jokingly asking her if she's been "a good little boy," Trix transforms an ordinary walk through the city into a magical experience not only for children but also for their parents (who, if they are at all sensitive to the rising cost of balloons, often leave Trix a little present of their own).

ART AND CRAFT CLASSES

These class listings are free of charge to anyone teaching a class which might further the development of art on the streets. If you wish to be listed as a teacher, send a brief description of your class to: STREET ART NEWS, S.F.S.A.G., Box 42009, S.F., CA 94142.

BATIK

Classes in Batik. Please call Cecé Gady for more information. 552-2855 or 552-0284.

Instruction in the ancient art of Batik as a fine art and as a craft. Students will make wall hangings and custom fabrics for all uses. Various dyes will be used. \$30 for six sessions, all materials included. Marjorie Berkowitz, 552-1439.

CERAMICS

Beginning and advanced instruction on the potter's wheel. Experienced teachers structure classes and emphasize learning the basics of throwing and glazing. \$25 for 4 consecutive lessons, 3 hours each once a week. \$35 for 8 consecutive lessons, 3 hours each twice a week. Call 587-4930 afternoons or evenings for starting dates and more information.

MISCELLANEOUS

Instruction in doll house and doll house furniture making. For more information call Rick Rosmer, 583-4715.

For a reference person to answer questions about wood-working: Jerry Lee, 548-1093.

STAINED GLASS

Weekend workshop (all day Saturday and Sunday). Students will complete at least two projects, using Tiffany and leaded glass techniques. All tools and materials are provided by the instructor. Fee: \$40.00 Dave Arnold, 392-3037.

Stained glass, leaded glass. Class hours may be arranged with instructor, usually limited to 3-5 students, 18 hours of instruction. Fee: (including everything but glass) \$35. Walter May, 285-0198.

Day or night classes, Tuesdays and Thursdays (18 hours, twice a week for 2 weeks). Students make a 1 ft. square leaded glass panel and a 1 ft. square copper and glass panel and learn to make a lamp. Fee: \$40, Jerry Stockton at 626-3592.

Group or private instruction in basic window and lamp construction, using traditional materials (lead and glass). Hours flexible for private instruction. Next class starts June 1. Fees vary. Sheldon Franklin, Marvin Mund, 431-7709.

DANCE

Non-stylized technique, natural approach to creative movement. Apprentice program. For class schedule, call Ann Halprin, 626-0414.

WEAVING

Weaving class. All materials and loom included in fee. \$50 for six lessons twice a week, Monday and Wednesday, day or evening. Class is 3 hours long. Taught by Susan Levitt. Call 626-1777. Other textile and weaving classes also available.

PAINTING

Painting classes in oils and watercolors: portrait and landscape. Teacher has exhibited work at the Royal Society of Portrait Painters in London, the Royal Scottish Academy in Edinburgh, and the DeYoung Museum. Class fee is \$5 for 3 hours. Tuesday 7-10, Thursday 1-4, and Friday 1-4. Hilda Kidder, 771-6394.

Classes in acrylics and oil painting. For more information call Felix Ferero, 981-1164.

Watercolor workshop. Class for beginning and advanced students. Experience in all phases of watercolor painting including, landscape, seascape

Watercolor workshop. Class for beginning and advanced students. Experience in all phases of watercolor painting including, landscape, seascape, and portraits. Morning and afternoon classes. 2 hours each. \$25 for 4 sessions. Ed Glafke, 982-5335.

KOPP CURBS CHALLENGED

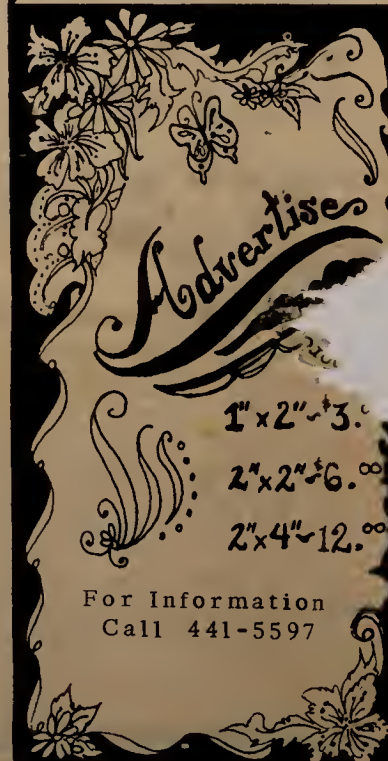
The San Francisco Street Artist Guild has filed a complaint in Superior Court for a writ of prohibitory injunction against the City of San Francisco. The lawsuit asks the court to order the Police Department to cease any enforcement of the provisions of Section 1727 of an ordinance, introduced by Supervisor Quentin Kopp, which was recently enacted by the Board of Supervisors.

Kopp's ordinance forces street artists to operate only on the curbside of the sidewalk and, at the same time, prohibits them from setting up on sidewalks with color-coded curbs. The street artists claim that these two provisions alone have virtually eliminated them from the downtown shopping areas.

Another aspect of the new law which severely restricts street artists' activities is the display size limitation. Displays may be no more than 5 feet in height, 4 feet in length, and 3 feet in width. A number of street artists contend that these limits make it impossible for them to operate legally.

The suit also alleges: 1) The ordinance's restrictions are aimed solely at street artists (and do not apply to newsracks or kiosks, flower stands, tour bus vendors, or any other sidewalk peddling activity) and therefore violates the Fourteenth Amendment--- Equal protection of the laws requires that no part of a class of individuals be discriminated against by specific legislation; and 2) Since part of the Kopp ordinance amends the "effect" and "intent" of Proposition "J" (the street artist initiative approved by over 80,000 voters last June), there is a clear violation of the California State Election Code. The code states that an ordinance passed by a vote of the people cannot be amended or repealed by a legislative body without resort to a vote of the people.

Attorneys for the street artists say that the trial date should be set within the next six weeks.



Advertise

1" x 2" - \$3.⁰⁰
2" x 2" - \$6.⁰⁰
2" x 4" - \$12.⁰⁰

For Information
Call 441-5597

LIFE AMONG THE SAVAGES

(continued from front page)

After the normal gestation period of Homo sapiens, the sandals arrived. (I almost felt that I should diaper them.) I immediately put them on, stepping on numerous nails, and immediately demanded why (of course it took longer and lots of four-letter words to express my question).

Darwin answered, "Si," then explained that the nails were to hold the soles on.

I inquired (sweetly, you understand) if a street artist were required by nature to walk or lie on a bed of nails.

"Only in the mind," he said, then offered to fix them.

Four months and a new color later (he spilled dye on them), the sandals were ready and I tried them on. Immediately the straps fell off.

"Why?" I asked (taking more time and four-letter words than before).

"They are easier to repair that way."

So, of course, I asked him to repair them.

But he answered that since he was creatively orientated he had stopped making sandals three months previously, and was now making hats, and that I should see a sandal-maker if I wanted them fixed. Grumbling and mumbling, I stalked (in those days I stalked) away after buying a hat (I didn't want to stifle his creative impulses).

Anyway, I was still into looking like a street artist and had heard about trading. Needing a belt, I approached Larry DeCoke, a more experienced craftsman, saying, "Hey man, you wanna trade?" (In those days I was also enthusiastic.)

He put his beer can down, looked at my stuff, sneered and said, "That shit looks like leftovers from a garage sale." (Even in those days there were resident cynics.) "If you want to trade you have to have a craft." He resumed drinking his beer and started yelling at his two teeny-bopper helpers to "get back to work." (More about him later.)

Well, I looked around for a craft. Beach Street was already the Leather Capitol of the World (you understand, this was pre-Union Square or Embarcadero) and I had decided that I didn't want to be responsible into repairing my own sandals. What could I do? At the time I was painting rocks, but who wants to go through life known as a rock painter? After weeks of research (watching commercials on TV)... Eureka! Etched Glass, my new craft! But problems arose.

For those of you who are not familiar with the technical aspects of this "craft", you apply molten wax to the glass, dry-point sketch your design after the wax has hardened, and then dip the whole thing into acid. My problem was getting rid of the wax residue after etching. Obviously a candle-maker would know how to dissolve wax, so I merrily wandered down to the street to seek out a candle-maker. And find one I did—a Mr. Wilhelm O'Chedder (say cheese, boy).

I approached him politely, "Say, Mr. Candle-maker, I need some information on wax."

Wilhelm put his hand on my shoulder and, looking me in the eye, said, "Boy, anything you want to know about wax, just ask me." So I asked him how to dissolve wax.

"Boy," he said, "have a beer and we'll discuss this. First go get the beer."

After running up the hill and back (in those days I ran) (and not for office), I again asked my question. Again Mr. O'Chedder put his arm around my shoulders.

"Boy, let me tell you..."—and then proceeded to tell me that wax came from petroleum products. An hour and a six-pack later, I interrupted him and again asked my question since he had only gotten to offshore drilling in Santa Barbara—with his hand on my shoulder he said, "Boy, that is a very good question. When you find the answer come and tell me," and with that, sent me up the hill to get another six-pack.

Needless to say I changed my craft. Those days were very festive—flags flying from trees, strolling musicians—and the craft shows themselves! One leather-worker (mentioned earlier) would sit stripped to the waist in a lotus position, dead center in a 40 foot display while his two little teeny-bopper helpers would run back and forth between the customers and the craftsman, giving him the money, getting the change, and then taking it back to the customers. The craftsman would occasionally wield a mighty mallet and stamp a key chain for a little "art in action."

During this time a Guild was formed, and along with it a Tiger brigade. Towards the end of the era (that summer) craftspeople started appearing and since Beach Street is small (when you grow up things seem smaller) the Beach Street Lottery was initiated. "How?" you may ask. By rolling out a huge roll of tar paper down the entire sidewalk with all the selling spots marked off on it from a lottery held the night before. But that is another episode. Next edition I move to the big time in:

NEW LOCATIONS, NEW HORIZONS or
PLEASE MR. POLICEMAN, DON'T LET YOUR
HORSE DO THAT ON MY DISPLAY!!

STREET ART NEWS is published each month by the San Francisco Street Artist Guild, Box 42009, San Francisco, CA 94142, (415) 441-5597.

We welcome all submissions of letters, manuscripts, art-work, photographs, etc. and will take all reasonable care with them, but we can assume no responsibility for unsolicited materials. Please attach name, address, and telephone number to any submission and include an adequately stamped, self-addressed envelope if you wish it to be returned. This edition is published in Mid-Spring, 1975 for distribution from April 20 to May 20. Deadline for next issue is May 10, 1975.



The San Francisco Street Artist Guild is dedicated to encouraging the creative and cultural development of the community by promoting arts, crafts, music, and theater in the open areas of the city; and to relieving unemployment by maintaining opportunities for people to display, sell, and perform their art.

Membership is open to anyone who earns his or her living, in whole or in part, by displaying, selling or performing their art on the streets or in the open areas of the city. Any person interested in joining the Guild should write to the above address or contact any of the following Guild members on Beach Street: Rick Rochlin, Jerry Lee, Dave Benitez, Alexander Stewart, Sandra O'Brien, or David Browda.





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SIDEWALK CONDUCT

Most street artists agree that disputes over selling space, dogs, trash, etc. could be avoided if everyone would observe a few common-sense courtesies. The following guidelines, designed to help prevent hassles, have been endorsed by the Steering Committee of the San Francisco Street Artist Guild:

- 1.) Do not use bricks, boards, papers, etc. to mark a space. If you come out before selling time to get a space, put up your display, let other people know it's yours, and stay in the general area.
- 2.) Do not leave anything out on the street overnight. Not only does it look bad, but

you really can't expect other street artists to respect your claim to a space if you leave it for more than a short time.

3.) Do not ask a friend to set up a display for you before you arrive on the street. You can't really expect other street artists who show up before you to honor a claim made in your absence.

4.) Pick up any trash (including cigarette butts and peanut shells) that you see around your display - whether or not you put it there - and remind your friends to do the same.

5.) For various reasons, no street artist's pets should be kept around street artist activities.

CLASSIFIEDS

SWAPS

I'd like to learn how to crochet hats etc. from Guild member in exchange for woven belts, sprouts?? Julie 621-4958.

Trade loose puka for turquoise. Dennis Milligan, 552-0085.

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MAIL ADS TO:
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S.F. 94142

WHEELS

For sale - 3 wheel, 26 inch bike w/basket. \$35 or trade. See Manuel (jewelry).

Wanted: 3 speed bike. Sally Bailey, 387-5938.

650 Kawasaki, clean, lots of fun, call Kim, 664-3291.

'67 Chevy, New Eng. & Paint. New int. Mich. tires & whls. Best offer. Bear, 364-7459.

Wanted: van - good running condition, must have windows around, buy or trade. John, 647-5035.

MISCELLANEOUS

Wanted: Fluorescent light fixture, approx. 4 ft. for workshop. Rick, 861-3054.

I make belts. I need 12 ft. to display effectively. I'm being victimized! FREE COW

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